

HEADQUARTERS, MILITARY DIVISION OF WEST MISSISSIPPI,

OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL INSPECTOR AND CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER,

*New Orleans, July 27th, 1864.*CIRCULAR }
No. 1. }

I. It is hereby announced, for the information of Medical Officers in the Military Division of West Mississippi, that the Chief Medical Officers of Departments, Armies, and Army Corps, alone, can hereafter be styled *Medical Directors*. Officers having the control of the medical affairs of any command less than an Army Corps, of a Division of an Army, or a Military District, will be styled *Surgeon in charge*.

The Senior Surgeon of a Military Post will be styled *Post Surgeon*. The military designations should always be inscribed above these titles.

II. The Medical Directors of the Departments of the Gulf and Arkansas, will transmit their papers through this office, except those that may be required to go direct to the Surgeon General's Office.

III. The Medical Directors of all of the Departments in the Military Division of West Mississippi, and the Surgeons in charge of the Military Districts of West Tennessee, Vicksburg and Natchez, will furnish for the use of this office, copies of the Monthly Return of Medical Officers, accompanied with a statement of the Regiments in which vacancies exist, with a list of Hospital Stewards, and where serving.

IV. Surgeons in charge of Hospitals in the Military Division of West Mississippi will furnish this office with a copy of their Weekly Report, with brief remarks upon the prevailing diseases, and the treatment adopted; epidemic and contagious diseases; and vaccinations. The number of laundresses, laborers and contrabands should be given.

Medical Directors of Departments, Surgeons in charge of Military Districts, and Post Surgeons in the Military Division of West Mississippi, will furnish a semi-monthly consolidation of their Weekly Report, the designations and the details for the various headings of the Report to be mentioned, for each Regiment and Battery.

When the commands are large enough, this consolidation will be made by Divisions.

V. Hospital Registers very often show merely the diseases with which patients enter the Hospital, and omit altogether the subsequent diseases they may have had while there. Such omissions render the Reports of Sick and Wounded false, as likewise all calculations and statistics based upon them. Hereafter the diagnosis upon the bed cards and the Register will be changed, so as to account for every disease each patient suffers, while in Hospital. If a patient have intermittent fever, gonorrhœa and diarrhœa during any one month, they should all be set down against his name, and entered on the Register, as so many cases of disease.

VI. In order to ensure the thorough application of, and obedience to the various orders, regulations and instructions, that have been promulgated to enforce the proper administration and working of the Medical Department; and as a means of keeping Medical Directors frequently informed, as to the efficiency and sufficiency of Medical Officers; the condition of supplies; the sick and death rates; and the sanitary condition of the troops; the prevailing diseases, their causes, and the means to be adopted for their prevention and relief; and all other matters, the knowledge of which may tend to elevate the standard of health, and increase the power of the troops, Medical Directors will cause careful inspections to be made of the troops, posts, camps and Hospitals under their control. This duty will be performed by all Medical Officers, who will be detailed in turn for this, in addition to their other duties, in the same way that line officers are detailed as officers of the day. Medical Officers belonging to a Division, or smaller command, should rotate with each other in their inspections; and those in charge of Hospitals, when they are situated in groups, should do likewise. Reports of these inspections will be made semi-monthly; and will only cover as much ground as can be conveniently and easily inspected within the above period. Haste in this duty should be avoided. After the Medical Directors of Departments have received

these reports, through the usual channels, and endorsed their action upon them, the most critical and instructive of them will be forwarded to this office.

It is not intended by this arrangement to impose more labor upon Medical Officers than they can conveniently perform; and it is confidently believed, that by thus varying their duties, enlarging their sphere of observation, and affording opportunities for a free interchange of experience, they will become mutually instructed; and by necessity, become more familiar with orders, circulars and the usages of service. This order will be sufficient authority for the performance of the above duties.

VII. Medical Directors will endeavor, as much as possible, to economise Medical Officers, by breaking up all unnecessary, so-called Medical Directorships and Superintendencies of Hospitals, which quite often are of no service, and simply duplicate the labor of the next office above them, and occasion a waste of time, clerical labor and stationery.

BY ORDER OF MAJOR GENERAL E. R. S. CANBY:

EDW. P. VOLLUM,

Lieut. Colonel, and Medical Inspector U. S. Army,
Chief Medical Officer.

